



MEDIA RELEASE

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Update: A video recording of today's conference is [now available for download here](#). An audio recording [is available at this link](#).

*****MEDIA RELEASE*****

Blueprint Nebraska tax modernization plan opens doors to growth and investment in Nebraska's workforce

Today, Blueprint Nebraska President Jim Smith, co-chairs Lance Fritz and Owen Palm, and Blueprint Nebraska Taxation & Incentives Industry Council chair Jim Greisch presented the new Blueprint Nebraska plan for tax modernization.

The Blueprint Nebraska tax modernization plan is the result of a collaborative statewide process launched in 2018, incorporating feedback from Nebraskans through surveys and public forums, the findings of nonpartisan and academic reports on Nebraska's tax reform opportunities and priorities, and the insights of the Blueprint Nebraska Taxation & Incentives Industry Council.

On state taxes, the plan significantly reduces income taxes for the average taxpayer, brings business income tax rates to a regionally-competitive level in a series of steps tied to state revenue growth, and keeps Nebraska's state sales tax at its current rate. On local taxes, tax modernization raises an additional \$2 billion in property tax relief funds over the next ten years and eliminates Nebraska's inheritance tax.

In addition, Blueprint Nebraska proposes to establish two new student loan relief programs to recruit graduates in high-skill and manufacturing careers, and to double the state's current investment in Research & Development.

These initiatives would be funded through a large-scale elimination of sales tax exemptions, and income tax deductions and credits, which [the economic modeling firm REMI projects](#) would result in an overall increase to state revenues of nearly \$500 million over the next decade.

“The Blueprint Nebraska plan will give communities in Greater Nebraska a distinct advantage for retaining and attracting workforce talent, by providing the region’s best balance of economic opportunity and quality of life,” said Owen Palm, co-chair of Blueprint Nebraska, and CEO of 21st Century Holdings in Scottsbluff.

“Of course, tax modernization will increase the state’s commitment to property tax relief, but it will offer so much more than that. The Blueprint Nebraska plan strengthens the state’s finances so we can provide benefits like student loan relief for graduates in Ag-tech and manufacturing, and helps Nebraska compete regionally and nationally by allowing people starting careers and small businesses to earn up to \$50,000 free of state income tax.”

The plan is estimated to retain or attract more than 70,000 residents, beyond current population growth expectations, through 2031. Estimates also project an additional \$17 billion in investment activity in the state, adding another \$40 billion to personal income in Nebraska over the next ten years.

“The thousands of Nebraskans who have participated in the Blueprint Nebraska process since 2018 have given us a head start over all the states that are currently looking to reinvent and reinvigorate their economies coming out of the pandemic, but that also means there’s a greater urgency to work alongside Nebraska’s leaders to now implement the Blueprint initiatives, from entrepreneurship and housing, to diversity and inclusion,” said Lance Fritz, co-chair of Blueprint Nebraska and CEO of Union Pacific Corp. in Omaha.

“Tax modernization helps support all of our initiatives by providing a firmer foundation for the state and more reasons why people and businesses should choose Nebraska.”

In 2018, leaders in Nebraska business, agriculture, government and higher education launched Blueprint Nebraska, a citizen-led, statewide economic development initiative. The effort resulted in a comprehensive, 15-point plan to stimulate the state’s economic growth, competitiveness and prosperity, while building on Nebraska’s many strengths. Lance Fritz, the chairman, president and CEO of Union Pacific Corp. in Omaha, and Owen Palm, the president and CEO of 21st Century Holdings in Scottsbluff, serve as co-chairs of Blueprint Nebraska.

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